

03/11/2011

Dear OJJ Colleagues:

Today the Joint Legislative Committee on the Budget heard the Governor's executive budget for fiscal year 2011-2012. As you can imagine, many departments and agencies will experience budget cuts and undergo streamlining efforts. OJJ is no different. Our fiscal year 2012 proposed budget is \$138,689,289, a decrease of \$13,455,347 from our current year's budget. We have held numerous meetings to look at our current budget and decide what falls within OJJ's core mission and ways to support streamlining measures.

The funding reduction for FY 2011-2012 is largely due to the reduction of Day Treatment Services. This decision was made based on balancing OJJ's core mission in light of diminishing resources. The necessary balance requires us to divert funding away from programs that don't directly support our mission.

OJJ will achieve additional savings through outsourcing certain services. This year OJJ contracted to outsource healthcare services at Jetson and Bridge City. Next year, we will reduce the costs of healthcare services at Swanson. These initiatives will allow OJJ employees to focus on our core function, save money and improve quality of services.

To further support evidence based practices, we have also decided to limit out of home placements for FINS youth. OJJ will no longer support FINS long-term placements in non secure residential facilities. This practice will be replaced with short-term respite, or crisis care, with the youth returning home under supervision.

In order to meet budget requirements, OJJ is again forced to implement a reduction in force. We will be reduced by 26 positions. Additionally, due to a proposal to consolidate certain management functions with the Department of Public Safety, we anticipate a reduction in central office personnel in the areas of human resources, accounting and IT functions. While the details of the proposal are not finalized, it is expected that this consolidation will affect 32 positions with some positions being eliminated and other employees transitioning to DPS. The loss of dedicated employees affects the entire agency. OJJ will seek to provide impacted employees with every possible resource and concession as we experience this transition.

With the current budget crisis, like all agencies, we are presented with a challenging situation. Our priority is and always will be meeting the unique mission of OJJ.

Sincerely,

Dr. Mary L. Livers, Ph.D., MSW